

# PLUGGED IN

FUN FOR KIDS

A COOPERATIVE PROJECT OF THE SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS AND THE EDUCATORS' ROUNDTABLE, PUBLISHED MONTHLY TO PROMOTE LEARNING AMONG YOUNG READERS IN NATURAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, TECHNOLOGY, AND ART

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## This Month's Theme: JOBS in the OUTDOORS

### What Would It Be Like to Be a Zoo Vet?

By Katie Holder, Santa Barbara Zoo

The life of a zoo vet is never boring. The vet at Santa Barbara Zoo takes care of more than 500 different animals! He makes sure they get annual check-ups and takes care of them when they are sick or injured. He even tells the zookeepers what they should feed the animals! This may sound like a lot of hard work, but our vet says that working with lots of different animals is the best part of his job. Every day is a new adventure!

All of these different animals keep life exciting, but

they also make a vet's job harder. The hardest thing about being a zoo vet is that sometimes you don't have all the answers, and you can't always cure a sick or hurt animal.

So what does it take to become a zoo vet? First of all, you have to go through many years of school to become a doctor of veterinary medicine. You also need to love science, since zoos are always learning more about our animals. It also helps to be a good team player and to be flexible.



Santa Barbara Zoo's vet, Dr. Karl Hill, checks the teeth of a snow leopard during a routine exam.

Photo by Daman Jackson Williams



Zookeeper Anne Jordan with Veronica, the Santa Barbara Zoo's turkey vulture.

Photo by Dean Noble

### What Would It Be Like to Be a Zookeeper?

By Piper Presley, Santa Barbara Zoo

The job of a zookeeper can be hard work, but it is always exciting. It is a zookeeper's job to make sure that the animals have food, clean water, and a clean home. Zookeepers do a lot more than clean up poop!

A big part of a zookeeper's job is to train the animals. Training the animals is very important and helps keep the animals safe. The lion keepers work with the lions through a grate to open their mouths and lift up each paw. This lets the keepers check the lions for anything that might be wrong.

Another part of a zookeeper's job is to keep the animals' lives exciting. Each zoo animal gets different toys, foods, scents, or special things to keep them entertained. Zookeepers work hard thinking of new tools to help keep the animals healthy and happy. Some of our animals even get to listen to music or watch TV.

What does it take to become a zookeeper? First of all, it helps to go to college and study science. Volunteering at a zoo or aquarium is also a great start. The most important thing for a zookeeper is to love animals and nature.

### How To Be An Ecologist

By Margaret Connors, Kids do Ecology at the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis

If you like being outdoors and are curious about how life works you might want to be an ECOLOGIST. Ecologists are scientists who work on land and at sea.

What is ecology about, anyway?

Ecology is learning about how living things relate to each other and to what's around them. If you are asking questions about how coyotes relate to the plants and other animals in their neighborhood (including us!), you are learning about ecology.

Ecologists learn about living things by:

- watching them,
- asking themselves questions,
- seeing what happens, and
- writing about what they find.

There are many kinds of ecology. Marine ecologists study fish and mammals in the ocean. They might study big fish like tuna far offshore, sea lions on islands near the coast, and salmon that migrate between the ocean and streams as far inland as Idaho!

To Be An Ecologist



Scientist Jessie Altstatt, Santa Barbara Channel Keeper, monitors eelgrass.

Photo by Robert Schwemmer

Ecologists can be teachers or research scientists. They often travel to interesting places. Another cool thing about being an ecologist is that every day is a little bit different.

Ecology is a fun, exciting career, where there are lots of things still waiting to be discovered.

Check out our Kids do Ecology website (in English and Español): <http://kids.nceas.ucsb.edu/>

### Forest Service Ranger

By Jennifer Gray, Los Padres National Forest

Forest Service rangers have been taking care of your national forests for more than 100 years. When you think of a forest ranger, what picture comes to your mind? Someone riding a horse through the backcountry ...

or searching for the smoke of a wildfire from a tall fire lookout ... or fighting a wildfire ... or living and working deep in the woods and having to hunt and fish for food?



THEN and NOW



Forest Ranger responding to fire.



Fire Chief and Forest Supervisor.

ALL of these images are correct. The early forest rangers were a hardy bunch that worked alone in the backcountry and had outdoor skills such as horseback riding, mule packing, trail building, and firefighting. Early forest rangers were almost always men. Women were not allowed to be forest rangers in the old days.

A lot has changed in 100 years! Lots of different kinds of people work for the Forest Service and many are women. Today's forest rangers have more and different duties than the early rangers. They also have new skills that help them care for the land and serve people.

What skills do you think a modern forest ranger needs?

Maybe you will want to work for the Forest Service someday. These are just a few of the jobs you could have: **Wildlife Biologist | Archeologist | Geologist | Wilderness Ranger | Fire Manager.**

There are many interesting jobs in today's Forest Service, whether you enjoy the outdoors or prefer to work in a ranger station. Call your local ranger station if you would like to know more about the Forest Service or visit the Kids' Section of the Forest Service website at: [www.fs.fed.us/kids](http://www.fs.fed.us/kids)

### You Can Find Books Like These About Jobs In The Outdoors At Your Local Library

By Janice Rorick, Santa Barbara Public Library

*If You Were a—Construction Worker* / by Virginia Schomp  
*I am a Forest Ranger* / by Cynthia Benjamin  
*If You Were a—Firefighter* / by Virginia Schomp.  
*I'm Going to be a Police Officer* / by Edith Kunhardt.  
*Riding the Ferry with Captain Cruz* / by Alice K. Flanagan  
*Opportunities in Forestry Careers* / by Christopher M. Wille

*Garbage Collectors* / by Tami Deedrick  
*Mail Carriers* / by Dee Ready.  
*Zoo Keepers* / by Tami Deedrick  
*Farmers* / by Dee Ready

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805-893-8765 www.msi.ucsb.edu

**Kids do Ecology**  
National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis  
805-892-2500 <http://kids.nceas.ucsb.edu/>

**Wildling Art Museum**  
805-688-1082 www.wildlingmuseum.org

**Ty Warner Sea Center**  
805-962-2526 www.sbnature.org

**The Outdoor School at Rancho Alegre**  
805-686-5167 www.theoutdoorschool.org

**The Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens**  
805-967-7369 www.fairviewgardens.org

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